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Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Report submitted by New Zealand

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to action 20 of the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I). That action plan stipulates that "States parties should submit regular reports, within the framework of the strengthened review process for the Treaty, on the implementation of the present action plan, as well as of article VI, paragraph 4 (c), of the 1995 decision entitled 'Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament', and the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, and recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996." At the 2010 Review Conference, States parties also recognized that nuclear disarmament and achieving the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons will require openness and cooperation. States parties affirmed the importance of enhanced confidence through increased transparency and effective verification.

2. In the Final Document, a number of actions on transparency were agreed. Under action 2, all States parties committed themselves to applying the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in relation to the implementation of their Treaty obligations. Under action 5, the nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to accelerating concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament and were called upon to promptly engage so as to, inter alia, "further enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence" and to report back to the Preparatory Committee at its third session in 2014 on the undertakings set out in action 5. Under action 19, all States agreed on the importance of supporting cooperation among Governments, the United Nations, other international and regional organizations and civil society aimed at increasing confidence, improving transparency and developing efficient verification capabilities related to nuclear disarmament. Under action 21, all the nuclear-weapon States were encouraged, as a confidence-building measure, to agree as soon as possible on a standard reporting form and to determine appropriate reporting intervals for the purpose of voluntarily providing standard information without prejudice to national security.

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3. New Zealand takes the view that transparency is a principle to which all States, nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike, should adhere because it helps reinforce compliance with Treaty obligations. The more that is known about the manner in which States implement their Treaty commitments, the greater the level of international trust in the regime. In this spirit, New Zealand has consistently lodged transparency reports since the 2000 Review Conference and, in the light of action 20, will continue to do so.

4. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its three pillars. We are dedicated to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, and we continue to encourage national, regional and global efforts to realize this goal. We note the importance of the undertakings agreed upon during the review conferences, particularly the outcomes reached in 1995, 2000 and 2010, which represent an integral part of the Treaty regime and must be implemented.

5. New Zealand takes the obligations under article VI and the commitments agreed upon at subsequent review conferences very seriously, particularly the decision entitled "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I) and Corr.2) adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, the 13 practical steps agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2000/28, vol. I) and the nuclear disarmament action points agreed upon at the 2010 Review Conference. The 2010 Review Conference action plan provides a very important blueprint for action in the short term, and New Zealand continues to take all available opportunities to urge all States parties to implement their obligations in full.

6. New Zealand is an active member of the New Agenda Coalition,[1] which promotes nuclear disarmament. Every year the members of the Coalition sponsor a General Assembly resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments". In resolution 68/39, bearing that same title, the Assembly emphasized the fundamental role of the Treaty and called upon States to comply fully with their commitments. New Zealand is pleased to be associated with three working papers submitted by the members of the Coalition to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference at its third session: an updated general working paper on nuclear disarmament (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/WP.27), a working paper exploring how States parties might implement article VI of the Treaty (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.18), and a working paper on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.19).

7. New Zealand is pleased to work with Chile, Malaysia, Nigeria and Switzerland (the members of the De-Alerting Group) in promoting action to lower the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems. In adopting resolution 67/46, the General Assembly welcomed the opportunities provided by meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference to address the further reduction of the operational status of nuclear-weapon systems, looked forward to the reporting of the nuclear-weapon States on their undertakings in that regard to the Preparatory Committee at its third session in 2014, and called for further practical steps to be taken on this issue. The Group has presented its views on the importance of continuing to address de-alerting in this review cycle and beyond to the

[1] Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa.

Preparatory Committee at its third session in 2014 (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.24). New Zealand remains committed to achieving progress in this area as part of a holistic approach to nuclear disarmament.

8. The 2010 Review Conference expressed its deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. New Zealand has been a strong supporter of the efforts that have been undertaken since the Review Conference to raise awareness about this central element of the nuclear disarmament debate. New Zealand has attended and actively participated in the two international conferences that have been held since 2010, in Norway and Mexico, in order to better understand the nature and gravity of the humanitarian consequences of any use, whether intentional or accidental, of nuclear weapons. New Zealand looks forward to the third international conference on this issue, to be held in Austria later in 2014. In addition, New Zealand has supported statements presented to the first and second sessions of the 2015 Preparatory Committee and to the First Committee of the General Assembly on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. New Zealand coordinated and delivered a joint statement in 2013 to the First Committee on this issue on behalf of 125 States, all States parties to the Treaty. A key conclusion of that statement was that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again is through their total elimination, including through fulfilling the objectives of the Treaty.

9. New Zealand remains a strong proponent of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We supported the Final Declaration adopted by the eighth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in September 2013, at which New Zealand served as Vice-President on behalf of South-East Asia, the Pacific and the Far East. New Zealand also associated itself with the final Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, adopted at the sixth ministerial meeting on promoting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was held in New York in September 2012. New Zealand was pleased that the 2010 Review Conference reaffirmed the essential role of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty within the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and the vital importance of the entry into force of that Treaty. The Treaty makes an important contribution towards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, constraining the qualitative improvement of existing nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of such weapons. New Zealand is pleased to be a core sponsor, with Australia and Mexico, of a recurrent General Assembly resolution on the Treaty, in which the Assembly has recognized the Treaty as a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

10. New Zealand strongly supports the objective and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, pending its entry into force, and urges all States to refrain from the testing of any nuclear devices. In this light, New Zealand has publicly condemned the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 October 2006, 25 May 2009 and, most recently, 12 February 2013, which were detected by the Treaty's verification system. These constituted violations of its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and were internationally condemned.

11. New Zealand remains disappointed that efforts to agree on a programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament, including sustained efforts since the 2010 Review Conference, have not been successful. New Zealand supports all efforts to overcome the current impasse in the Conference on Disarmament so that substantive work in the Conference can commence without further delay. It is of concern to New Zealand that the Conference is not fulfilling its potential or contributing to efforts to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this context, New Zealand supports the early negotiation of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

12. New Zealand is a firm advocate of the role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in contributing to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. New Zealand is a full party to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty of 1985 (Treaty of Rarotonga) and is involved in efforts to promote greater engagement between States that are part of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

13. In 2012, New Zealand was pleased to introduce, with Brazil, a draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", which was adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 67/55). In that resolution, the Assembly stressed the importance of the contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world and noted with satisfaction that all nuclear-weapon-free zones in the southern hemisphere are now in force.

14. New Zealand welcomes the reaffirmation at the 2010 Review Conference of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review Conference and the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It is regrettable that the conference was not held in 2012 or 2013, and we continue to call on the conveners, the facilitator and the States of the region to exert all efforts to ensure that the conference is convened as soon as possible.

15. New Zealand is an active member of the Vienna Group of Ten,[2] which produces working papers for the Preparatory Committee on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, nuclear safety, security and safeguards, export controls and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We are pleased to support the composite paper and recommendations put forward by the Vienna Group of Ten for consideration by the Preparatory Committee in 2014.

16. New Zealand is in full compliance with its article II commitments. The country's obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are legislated in the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act 1987. The concerns of New Zealand about the compliance of other non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty have been expressed in various forums, including at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

17. The country's comprehensive safeguards agreement with IAEA came into force on 29 February 1972, with our Additional Protocol concluded on 24 September 1998. In February 2014 we were pleased to sign the modified Small

[2] Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden.

Quantities Protocol to our Safeguards Agreement. With no nuclear weapons, no nuclear energy generation, no nuclear reactors and no production of uranium or other relevant material, New Zealand conducts only very minor activities subject to safeguards. IAEA continues to assess New Zealand as being in full compliance with all its safeguards commitments.

18. New Zealand has given strong support to a system of strengthened IAEA safeguards, which is an essential component of the global non-proliferation regime. IAEA, through its safeguards, verifies assurances that States are meeting their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and provides the mechanism through which States demonstrate their compliance. Universal application of the integrated safeguards system, including the Additional Protocol, would promote collective security, and New Zealand calls upon all States that have not yet done so to conclude such agreements at the earliest possible date. New Zealand continues to look for opportunities to strengthen the application of nuclear safeguards and, to this end, is pleased to have joined the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network in April 2014.

19. New Zealand applies export controls to materials and dual-use goods that can be used in a nuclear weapons programme. We work actively to strengthen and coordinate these measures with other members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and with the Zangger Committee, which New Zealand joined in November 2013.

20. New Zealand reaffirms the inalienable right of States parties to peaceful nuclear technology, in conformity with articles I, II and III of the Treaty, and is pleased to continue its support of the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative. It remains New Zealand's view that safeguards, safety, security and waste management all need to be an integral part of the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. New Zealand remains actively engaged in international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security, including at the Nuclear Security Summit and through our funding of the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

21. New Zealand continues to actively promote the safe transport of radioactive material at IAEA and other relevant forums. New Zealand is interested in ensuring that the highest possible safety standards are adopted and applied by those transporting radioactive material, that coastal and other interested States receive notification in advance of shipments and that adequate liability arrangements are in place. In September 2013 New Zealand was pleased to join a number of coastal and shipping States at IAEA in agreeing upon voluntary best practice guidelines on communication to apply to certain shipments of radioactive material.

22. New Zealand remains committed to efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation education. In New Zealand, funding is available through the Peace and Disarmament Education Trust for postgraduate research aimed at promoting international peace, arms control and disarmament. The Disarmament Education United Nations Implementation Fund was established in 2004 to implement the recommendations of the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124). New Zealand is pleased that funding provided through the Implementation Fund supports the work of New Zealanders in promoting progress towards disarmament and non-proliferation, including in relation to nuclear weapons.